Autobiography of a Yokal
by Ernest Wadsworth, edited by Francis Howcutt © 2024
This work is openly licenced via CC BY-NC-SA 4.0.
https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-sa/4.0/

Autobiography of a Yokal

by Ernest Wadsworth

edited by Francis Howcutt

Ernest Wadsworth, Felicity & Francis Howcutt
Summer 1956

This work is openly licenced via CC BY-NC-SA 4.0.
https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-sa/4.0/

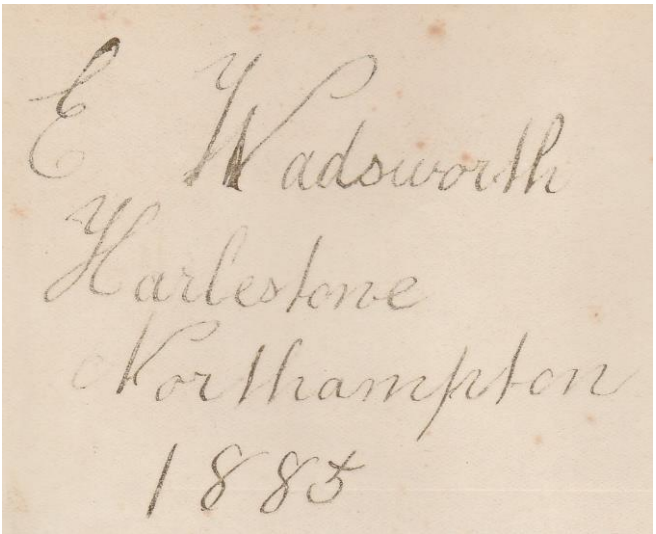
Contents

	Page
Introduction	2
Ernest Wadsworth	4
Autobiography of a Yokal – the manuscript	10
Commentary	111

Introduction

I recall, as a young child, visiting Ernest Wadsworth ('Uncle Ern' to me) at his home at Chapel Brampton. On 31 July 1964, his widow Mrs Catherine Florence Wadsworth ('Aunty Kate') gave me a collection of his writings, which include poems and works of fiction. Amongst them is an exercise book titled '*Autobiography of a Yokal*' whose 101 pages were evidently written in 1954 or 1955, as the author mentioned that the next birthday would be his 79th.

The manuscript is not only an autobiography. It includes the author's views on subjects such as the shortcomings of what were then modern youth and features details no doubt partly harvested from the many printed books that he kept at home. In his small library was an eight-volume set of '*British Battles on Land and Sea*', published by Cassell and Company – an edition stated to have been specially prepared for subscription and not obtainable through the general booksellers. Those particular books must have come to him when he was no more than nine years old, as this inscription is written at the front of the first book in the series:



Perhaps there was a benefactor.

This work is openly licenced via CC BY-NC-SA 4.0.
https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-sa/4.0/

It is not clear who the author thought would read the autobiography. From 1923 until the end of his life, the other members of his household were Aunty Kate, their daughter Mabel and her husband Albert Dartnell. I do not know whether they read it from cover to cover, but they did recall Uncle Ern spending many hours (as he put it) '*writing for dear life*'.

Published autobiographies are often composed by people with extensive formal education or celebrities. Ernest Wadsworth fell into neither category. Therefore, what he said and how he said it provide relatively rare insights into the personality and experiences of an industrious craftsman who grew up in late-Victorian rural England, respectful (for the most part) of the local hierarchy. Depending on which of his parents one has in mind, he was a member of the first or the second generation of his close family to be literate.

My own connection to the Wadsworth family is that Aunty Kate's sister, Emma Eliza Bott (1878-1943) married Mark Howcutt (1880-1965). They were my grandparents.

Francis Howcutt
6 April 2024
francishowcutt@gmail.com

Emma and Mark Howcutt

This work is openly licenced via CC BY-NC-SA 4.0.
https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-sa/4.0/

Ernest Wadsworth

Ernest Wadsworth was born on 4 February 1876 at Harlestone, some five miles north-west of the centre of Northampton, the third of a family of six children, all of who survived infancy.

The population of the parish amounted to 569 in 1881 and fluctuated between 563 and 645 in the censuses that were taken every ten years during the period 1821 to 1911. Most houses were to be found either at Lower Harlestone (the area along or close to the main road from Northampton to Rugby) or at Upper Harlestone which is further to the south-west in the vicinity of the 'Chapel' labelled on the following Ordnance Survey map, which is based on surveys carried out in 1883-1885.

Image courtesy of The National Library of Scotland
https://maps.nls.uk/view/239765125

The map shows the locations of some of the places mentioned in the diary such as Althorp, Harlestone House, Church Brampton, Chapel Brampton, Brampton Hill and Hopping Hill.

This work is openly licenced via CC BY-NC-SA 4.0.
https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-sa/4.0/

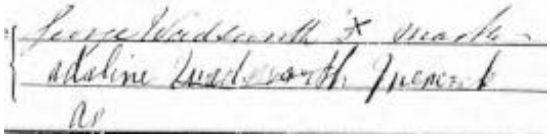
Ernest and his siblings were:

	Born	Married	Died
Edward George	1872	Annie Jelf Hayman 1906	1923 Essex
Eliza	1874	James Thomas Drage 1897	1956 Northampton
Ernest	1876	Catherine Florence Bott 1898	1956 Chapel Brampton
Emily	1878	George Cosby 1931 William Edwin Robins 1937	1960 Greens Norton?
Thomas	1880	Adele Chaumien 1910	1966 Saulieu, France
Eva	1883	n/a	1974 Northampton

Their parents, George Wadsworth and Adeline Meacock, had married at Flore – some seven miles from Harlestone - on 6 June 1870.

George (1845-1919) had been born at Harlestone, the home of his Wadsworth forebears back to the latter part of the 18th century. Various censuses record his occupations as labourer, gardener, forester and bricklayer. Adeline (c.1848-1931) was born at Flore. Both George and Adeline grew up as children of large families.

A school had been established at Harlestone as early as about 1710. However, Flore parish register confirms that, although at the time of their marriage Ernest's mother was able to sign her name, his father simply supplied his mark.



Corresponding records of the previous generation disclose that all four of Ernest's grandparents made their marks in the relevant parish registers when they married rather than providing signatures. These marriages were of:

- William Wadsworth & Anne Smith at Harlestone on 31 May 1824
- John Meacock & Elizabeth Robinson at Flore on 5 March 1827

Ernest was living at Harlestone with his parents and siblings at the time of the 1881 census. Ten years later, his widowed maternal grandmother Elizabeth Meacock had joined the household, her age being recorded as 84 and her occupation as '*depends on friends*'.

The author's earliest employments are described in the diary. He was living at Harlestone when on 19 July 1898 he married Catherine Florence Bott (1874-1965) of Naseby at her parish church. She was the oldest of the four daughters of Jesse Bott (1850-1891) and his wife Alice Crisp (1854-1938).

Ernest and his wife set up home at Harlestone, where Mabel Florence, their only child, was born on 13 January 1901. The family were still living there when the census was held on 31 March of that year, Ernest's occupation being recorded as a '*Bricklayers Labourer*'. By 1911, they had moved to 4 Chapel Brampton (now 4 Welford Road, Chapel Brampton). When Ernest completed the schedule required by the census held in that year, he described his occupation as '*mason (estate)*'. As well as the three members of the Wadsworth family in residence, a boarder was present at that juncture - Kate Clayton, a 34-year-old elementary school teacher.

This work is openly licenced via CC BY-NC-SA 4.0.
https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-sa/4.0/

4 Chapel Brampton was one of the many cottages in the area that were then owned by Lord Spencer. Viewed from the road, it was the left-hand half of a pair of houses that shared a single front door and entrance lobby. The ground floor consisted of a front room, kitchen and small pantry. Upstairs were two bedrooms. Until the 1960s, there was no bathroom or indoor sanitation. The WC was in a separate unheated building reached by a short walk through the garden behind the house.

By the outbreak of the First World War, Ernest's sister-in-law Emma Eliza Howcutt and her family were living at Waterworks Road, Brixton Hill in south London. Zeppelin airships had been spotted over Streatham as early as 1914. By 1916, air raids were taking place in London and Emma's husband Mark was called up. It was agreed that Emma and their four children would move to stay with the Wadsworths at Chapel Brampton.

Emma's daughter Dorothy (1909-2006) recalled that Mabel started work at the Co-op in Northampton and went to live with her mother's sister, Minnie Agnes Clipstone ('Aunty Min') (1881-1971), and her family at Kingsthorpe. For the two years when the Howcutt children lived at Chapel Brampton, their mother and aunt took turns to stay at home or go away to work. For some of the time, Kate was employed as the cook at the house of a doctor at Northampton Hospital. The alternative arrangement involved Emma being in service as a maid at Teeton Hall, about four miles from Chapel Brampton. Her afternoon off was on Thursday, when she would walk to and fro to visit her children, in winter returning to Teeton by the light of a lantern.

On the night of the 1921 only Ernest, his wife and daughter were resident at their home. He was recorded as an 'Estate Mason', working for Earl Spencer at Althorp and Mabel as a shop assistant in the confectionary department of Northampton Co-operative Society. The latter part of Ernest's working years was applied to the needs of Althorp and neighbouring properties of the Spencer estate. Page (80) of his autobiography indicates he retired from employment in about 1945.

This work is openly licenced via CC BY-NC-SA 4.0.
https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-sa/4.0/

Althorp House in about 1900

Mabel and Catherine Wadsworth

A red-letter day arrived on 18 August 1923 when Mabel married Albert Parker Dartnell. For many years, Albert worked at the Co-op in Northampton, so they may well have first met at work there. The marriage took place in the parish church at Church Brampton, followed by a wedding breakfast in the picturesque school at Chapel Brampton – this was a short walk from the Wadsworth family home but was demolished in the 1960s along with Brampton Hall to make way for a housing development named Cedar Hythe.

This work is openly licenced via CC BY-NC-SA 4.0.
https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-sa/4.0/

Mabel and her father

Albert and Mabel Dartnell

Back row – Albert & Mabel Dartnell, Ernest Wadsworth
Front row – Dorothy Howcutt, Muriel & Marjorie Clipstone

This work is openly licenced via CC BY-NC-SA 4.0.
https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-sa/4.0/

The wedding breakfast at Chapel Brampton school

On 30 November 1956, Ernest died at home at Chapel Brampton, having suffered from kidney disease and arteriosclerosis. He was buried in the churchyard at Church Brampton three days later. Aunty Kate (pictured below) remained in the cottage until her death in 1965.

Though sometimes poorly as he had been gassed in the First World War, Albert passed his 90th birthday before he expired in 1987. A few years later, Mabel moved from Chapel Brampton to Wootton - her last home before she died in 1993. Mabel and Albert had no children, so Ernest Wadsworth is without living descendants.

This work is openly licenced via CC BY-NC-SA 4.0.
https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-sa/4.0/

Autobiography of a Yokal – the manuscript

(1)

The Autobiography of a Yokal

Once again I am trying my hand at writing but untill now, I must confess my literary efforts have not been very successful. So we try again, in the first place I happened to be born under very humble circumstances so I naturally expect you will not forget to make a little allowance when reading this. Well as far back a I can remember and being one of six we were allways well looked after, owing to the fact that I had a good Mother to be blest with. Now this village I was fortunate enough to be born at (or unfortunate) I dont which, I am not quite sure. Now this village in the first place is very old fashioned and I doubt if it would be possible to find its equal anywhere under the sun, for the cottages are scattered about everywhere

This work is openly licenced via CC BY-NC-SA 4.0.
https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-sa/4.0/

(2)

I well remember two hawkers who had been "they said" in the village all day, thier language is not worth repeating, all the same I quite believe them. Now all the same it is very picturesque owing to its scattered position, and also for it fine trees, especially chestnuts, these I well remember helping gather for market when I was a boy. It also once had a beautifull Hall but owing to a certain breed prigs starting to want everything, it had to be destroyed and that's what all the gents should do with then instead of leaving them for a set of thieves. There is a very old church there built 1320 to 1325 at that time we are told, deer roamed the ancient park's, which consist of several hundred's of acres. I have seen old pictures it shows many deer grazing in the parks.

This work is openly licenced via CC BY-NC-SA 4.0.
https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-sa/4.0/

(3)

In the first place stone as made this Hartestone village very popular, for hundred of years it was used in many parts as there is no other to equal it, as the whether has no affect on it, many would like to see some of the out building, built against solid rock. I will remember when they used to get out lumps 2 or 3 tons and saw them up, and its a pity they dont today. "I will" before I go any further describe my own part in this story, yes I was born in a little cottage, well there was really two what you would discribe as a semo-detached today, our house one bedroom and one attic, this had a hole about 2 feet square and we used to climb through with a step ladder, there was no question of putting a bed up as you could only just

This work is openly licenced via CC BY-NC-SA 4.0.
https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-sa/4.0/

(4)

get a chair through and my Mother used to climb through this several times a day and never grumble I should very much like to see some of the ladies of to-day doing it poor thing's nothing like them good old time's today. I am afraid I have run away with my story as I wanted to discribe this old-fashioned cottage but you really want to see inside one to know what they are like. After I discribed about stone intended finishing about park this contains 160 acres very few people see as to is behind the Paddock's. These paddock's are very fine inside and there used to be many race horses kept there and they had every comfort, they were in charge of a man named Wilson I knew his son many years, ~~they~~ later

This work is openly licenced via CC BY-NC-SA 4.0.
https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-sa/4.0/

(5)

lived at the dove cot. At the time race horses were kept there used to be a race meeting every Easter tuesday but they were discontinued in 1739 they were held on the heath and I think that circle was the course. Now I see the house they have taken down was called the mansion house and was occupied by a Mr Nugent untill 1872 after that Lord Southampton, it was a most lovely spot with its large lake and wood land all around, but that has had its trouble it burst its banks flooded all Lower Harlestone, I have heard my father talk about them carrying the fish back to re-stock it, I dont think he was very old. Another strang thing about Harleston, that is the two kinds of clay and not far apart one makes red bricks one white, it is also noted for the best lime stone there is

This work is openly licenced via CC BY-NC-SA 4.0.
https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-sa/4.0/

(6)

there is still one or two old lime kiln's about on farms. Going back to the old home again the old pair that lived next door were born at least one hundred and fifty years ago I have known six generation's of that family I was not very old when they died I know they were good neighbour's. They would appear queer old fogey's those days, but far more sociable, that gadabout spirit had not infested their minds at that time, all used to work in fact I dont remember what age I did start for I was allway doing something or I was not very happy I & most of the children spent most of their time running errands as you used to have to fetch all you had we had brain's those days and a good school and we did not go there to play all day, I remember one of my old customer's I used to fetch snuff for, she used

This work is openly licenced via CC BY-NC-SA 4.0.
https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-sa/4.0/

(7)

to smoke a short clay pipe & should she was about ninety anyway they used to keep you running about all your spare time. I think it would do the kids a world of good if they had their bicycles taken away for a time for I have seen many cycle to the law from back door they are allmost to lazey to get on them. I dont know that you can altogether blame them as they dont finish with the tit bottle untill they should have done three years work no wonder they have the brain of a calf. One thing there was more beer drinking in the old days I must admit one reason was the Farmer's brewed their own and they could also buy good beer three half-pence a pint. The Farmer's little cared what happened at home so long as they could get

This work is openly licenced via CC BY-NC-SA 4.0.
https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-sa/4.0/

(8)

their work done for beer and many large families had to suffer for this. Well I may say I have lived over seventy years without and done as much work as the next man and as good as most men. Still as I abstained from it I may be a little severe in my judgment, as I have fetched hundreds of pints in my young day from old Taty Wells out door. I seem to be running headlong away with my story, and must return to my youth. In the first place I would like to say, nothing prevented my Mother from giving us a good meal and sending us out clothed respectable there being six of us to provide for. This you would easily understand if I was to tell you the price of provision's seventy years ago, with only fourteen shillings a week coming in to buy tobacc

This work is openly licenced via CC BY-NC-SA 4.0.
https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-sa/4.0/

(9)

beer, pigs food, out of that. I should like to relate one more item about the old cottage it was situated on very low ground, and years ago we used to have some very heavy snow falls when these ocured, and the thaw set in, the floods reached to our back door, so each winter when this was likely to happen, Father would get his clay ready to plaster round the bottom of the doors and up the side and then climbe through the window, the clay would to stay ther untill they had safely subsided. But after many years of this sort of trouble the council put a new conduit under the road so that it never floods now. While talking of trouble I think I must have been a champion for this sort of thing I could not

This work is openly licenced via CC BY-NC-SA 4.0.
https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-sa/4.0/

(10)

not have been very old, I just about remember what must have been my first lapse, for before I reached my teens I was allways in up to my neck. Now this is just the first I remember and quite well. This little incident happened in our own garden, some years back dad had grafted a new apple tree, now it was just bearing its first crop of fruit and everybody was under orders not to pick its luscious fruit, well I may say I solved the problem I had a bite at those I could reach without picking, there was a bit of a fus but they laughed it off. Our family was to large by four according to our income. Not because the living I was not so good we lived just as well for food we did not have so many meals three good ones a

This work is openly licenced via CC BY-NC-SA 4.0.
https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-sa/4.0/

(11)

day but they substantial and think that made fourteen shillings go about as far. Another thing everybody had a more regular way of living that makes a lot of difference. We were allway's regular at day school and the chapel sunday school, the only time I remember missing this I was not very old was when the parson Canon Bury preached to the navvy's at pheasant tree gates when the new railway was being made from northampton to Rugby, this he done for many months in the summer. Yes and I shoud liked you to have heard the navvy's joining lustily in the singing. What struck me most pecular about this meeting was the men up a large ash tree that used to stand there it was very large and you were able to walk up the butt and there the men sat all in the

This work is openly licenced via CC BY-NC-SA 4.0.
https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-sa/4.0/

(12)

branches throughout the service. One other item I distinctly remember and that was the last prize fight in northamptonshire out of doors I dont know if you know Kobotth wood if you do it was on the right when you get through the first gate from Harlestone you down through the the opening on right to a field called fox hunting and about half way acros you will see a pit, well they were just ready to start when the police raided them from Little Brughton. I have never seen such a lot of people running through Harlestone before or since all through the farms, several police got hurt with glass bottals and thats seventy years ago. Now gleaning was another job I started rather early in life, for I dont remember the first time I went, now this used to be a very good thing and what loads of wheat they

This work is openly licenced via CC BY-NC-SA 4.0.
https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-sa/4.0/

(13)

carry, on their head, but the best of all was what we derived from it. may sound a bit common to talk about gleaning, but was it, not half so common as the thousands of people walking about in their idleness to-day to lazy to pick up their own food, and there tons of mw behind these new machines, I can till you we used to get enough wheat to last us well over xmas for bread making and Barley enough to finish off a good pig so that we had a bit of bacon to go at. Now I can tell you there's nothing like money to create idleness pay a man well and you may do the work yourself, people are far to well off today to be forced to work and the larger their family the better they are provided for. At present the goverment is spending about a thousand pounds on each child and what are they, what

This work is openly licenced via CC BY-NC-SA 4.0.
https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-sa/4.0/

(14)

are they with school meals and milk, they are having to build homes for half of them are potty, dont know how to read or write, nobody only people potty would would ever encouraged people to have larger family's. Could we not learn a lesson from the over populated countries abroad. Any christian would be doing this country a great service by trying to discourage people from having more than three. There it is most people never think or care now everybody has to help keep them when they have got them anybody, can see what will be done with them someday when war comes again and they have to face cannon and machine gun they will pretend to grieve. [Thanks to blessed charity] but blood money will soonheal all, and thats all they will care. I still roam from my tale,

This work is openly licenced via CC BY-NC-SA 4.0.
https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-sa/4.0/

(15)

Well I started school rather early and I can assure you this I was not very fond of, and was always getting into trouble they were building that new school of course we must get a plank across a large stone and I was in the middle doing the swankey part and put my finger under the plank and I knew I had. Another rather amusing event I was locked in school and not alowed to go home for dinner that was for good conduct I expect but I was not have that sort of game played on me so as soon as the boss turned his head I dived out of the window then the air went blue I remember going off across the fields towards Holdenby, well he sent four or five of the oldest after me they caught me, and hauled me back, I did not care I had

This work is openly licenced via CC BY-NC-SA 4.0.
https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-sa/4.0/

(16)

a good afternoon out. I had many such events but they are to numerous to mention. Now in the old days it was very amusing to see the old men wearing very tall top hats and taller than they are today and not only for sunday, but to go to work in them. Now they made a lovely target I remember how we used to get behind them and have a pop at them, and then and then make tracks quick. In those day old men not having much schooling suffered from vile tempr' and I pity you if you were caught by one. Several were employed at the hall by Lady Southampton, used to make what they called farthing faggots, for fire lighting there and they used to get there same time as our school time, so you may guess they did not miss much for a bit of a clash most mornings.

This work is openly licenced via CC BY-NC-SA 4.0.
https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-sa/4.0/

(17)

By this time we were being moved into a new cottag, well what I mean a fresh one, rather a novel affair it was really two cottages with one front door, it was about two hundred yards from the old one, the most queer part about it, it only had one front door to both houses, so to get over that difficulty we arranged to give one knock for one house, and two for the other, so it took a bit of getting used to but it was not long before we had the lot and a good big house it was with barn and washouse and good garden. We had a very amusing time moveing I can tell you and verys oon the old man died next door I can tell you we had a fine old mess then for they nearly gutted it, still it was what was wanted. This was about the time of Queen Victoria jubilee which we celebrated in style, all children were being presented

This work is openly licenced via CC BY-NC-SA 4.0.
https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-sa/4.0/

(18)

with medal and mug's, we also had sports and a good rep-ast, men having their beer to their hearts content. I well remember one little old man I dont supose I should be far wrong if I said he never missed a single night going to the booser but this what it done for him as he was never at home, his trouses got in a bad state so he got a new pair and being a little man they were to long after wearing them many times in fold, and mang cross word, his wife decided to shorten them after he was gone to bed and then in the morning he decided to do the same; result they were just below his knees I can vouch for it as I saw him in them mang times they made him a regular laughing stock. I am afraid I must refrain from writing many of my personal exploits which I had inteded to write about, but I still remember one more

This work is openly licenced via CC BY-NC-SA 4.0.
https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-sa/4.0/

(19)

incident about a blind man he had been milkman on a farm for many years, he was a wonderfull man he done everything far better than many of the men today and without help. Now the fields were the cattle used to lay joined our garden, and many times when I saw him coming I used to run and drive drive them to him this was on a Sunday I had just come from Sunday school, so I must go creeping close up behind him very quiet he thinking it was a cow, brought his big ash stick (as he allways had when going for the cows) round and caught my head and knocked me out it was a clout I can tell you but it learnt me a lesson. Never to approach a blind man without speaking. One other thing I often what boys would do today if they had to walk to Northampton every Saturday and carry a good bag of

This work is openly licenced via CC BY-NC-SA 4.0.
https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-sa/4.0/

(20)

provisions back I used to and then do fourteen miled on Sunday to Heyford and back, It would do some of the lazy young hown's good instead of having tit from government untill idle hands many but who are you to blame since we had a idle goverment for five years that did not like work and stopped others doing it. England has become nuthing but a lazy nation. One of my favourite passtimes when in town was to watch them building the new town hall they had some wonderfull machinery lifting some of the large stones. Another item we used to visit the house of a drunken man, one of the worst cases I think it would be possible to find, for he smashed up everything in the home. My Mother never went empty handed with six to keep at home he had one of best, but killed her in time. After killing her I dont think

This work is openly licenced via CC BY-NC-SA 4.0.
https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-sa/4.0/

(21)

many men had such punishment at least I have not seen any not one of his family would recoguise him, and he simply rotted away, this was far to good for him, he ought to have been hung in publick so that was the end of J Lansbury. Well I remember in those days after you left Bear duston there was no more horses untill you got to hopping hill then one engineer business then green man one street just this side the station where my Aunt lived. Well you know this sort of thing would do a world of good if all cycle's could be locked away for a few years and make the lazy young generation walk for a ~~worse~~ sample I have never seen. I dont supose this cannny young generation have any idea what the roads were like seventy years ago when the roads were not roled well most of the stones were about three times the size of an egg and when I

This work is openly licenced via CC BY-NC-SA 4.0.
https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-sa/4.0/

(22)

started you had to watch every inch
you rode on, of course there was nothing
only solid tires in those days. I think I
was about the first to have one of the
special sort from coventry that was
over sixty years ago. I may say the
first one I knew had wooden wheels, and
you kneeded no bell to warn you of
its approach for I could hear it a long
way off, and pedals were on the front
wheel. Children see a lot today but
I can assure you they have missed a lot
what was worth seeing. I should like the
boys and girls to see the beautifull teams
the millers and brewers used to drive and
also the carriage and pairs Althorp, and the
other gentry with the driver perched up on
their high seats, with a long whip there are
very few teams in England today, and they
are only on show grounds. That is how

This work is openly licenced via CC BY-NC-SA 4.0.
https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-sa/4.0/

(23)

common cars look, even the best money can buy. When you consider three thousand pound and often four it took to buy a good carriage and pair, and all harness silver mounted. "The real trouble was" they were not going fast enough, ~~no~~ now the trouble is they are going to fast and the result is they are killing thousand's of little children, its not so much the old people they care about as they are considered a nuisance in these days. We hear a lot of talk about and fus about war and peace, and at the same time we have a worse foe in our midst, what I mean, half educated generation what we need today is eye's back and front to there are very few you can trust getting one on the head from the cosh, and how cunning they look, and 90 percent can neither read or write but the country seem's

Autobiography of a Yokal
by Ernest Wadsworth, edited by Francis Howcutt © 2024
This work is openly licenced via CC BY-NC-SA 4.0.
https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-sa/4.0/

to be taking a large toll of them. The trouble with cars is people drunk or partly and thats where the old horse did its duty as I have known hundreds of times in my lifetime, I have seen them come home with rein lying in bottom of cart many times. But drink is going to play its part both ways now, with the childrens allowance they are making far more money and the result up goes the birth rate all through ignorance, from a ignorant party, and its what they call welfare, it was all humbug, and nothing more, ruined the old country for their own greed, and to get thousands of pipd drawing a large salery from the result. I think everyman who is allowed to become a member of parliament should have a stiff college training before they are allowde to do such a lot of harm as we have seen done

This work is openly licenced via CC BY-NC-SA 4.0.
https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-sa/4.0/

(25)

battling with the labour, but then their policy is one or two who can speak and the rest are just duds, and receive orders when to put their hand, and both if they get the chance self and self again, one change they have made there seems no tramp about now, since they have gone to Westminster. Make no mistake there is no class of people been hit like the G.N.P. keeping other people's kids. This morning I have just been reading of a large place at the I.C.W. where they can deal with hundreds of sub-normal at a cost of eight pounds seventeen shilling per week each kid, none can say that labour had not got their eye to business what little time they were in power for they created thousand of cushy jobs for their pals. Now I consider British youth are a very poor sample many of them workshy. Yes we had many good things in the

This work is openly licenced via CC BY-NC-SA 4.0.
https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-sa/4.0/

(26)

good old days, what is there today x mas
alone we all used to make tracks for Althorp
and all the family used to come back loaded
never had to buy blankets and sheets all free
and many things for little or nothing
coal eight pence a cwt, I had by now
just got in my teens and looking for
a little work, this I had no difficulty in
finding. My first place was at a farm
called Yew Free morning and night. The
Farmer there had a large family I was
shoe black in the morning and stick chopper in
the evening for this I used to draw one shilling
a week and that was not to bad, often twenty
pairs in the morning so I felt quite rich.
Oh I forgot knife cleaning, now if there was
one job I detested this was one but it had
to be done there was no stainless in those
days. I often think he employed me more for
company for his boys for we used to play

This work is openly licenced via CC BY-NC-SA 4.0.
https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-sa/4.0/

(27)

about half the time I was there so the boys used to help me so that it give us more time for mischief and got in many a scrap for thrashing the kids. I well remember during the winter we used to get a good fire going, then we used to get a long string and a sieve and catch a few sparrows pick them and clean them and hang them down from on wire and roast them have a double wire and they would keep turning round and they were beautifull with a bit of salt and nothing more tasty so you better try one. Well one day I remember I had just finished my work and put the shoes in the kitchen when a lovely lot of snow caught me in ~~the~~ nicely in the neck just as I reached my office and. I can tell you somebody had to shift, and sharp, too for I had a little bit of

This work is openly licenced via CC BY-NC-SA 4.0.
https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-sa/4.0/

(28)

temper when necessary I found out it was the Farmers daughter, so I decided to bide my time a I knew she would soon be out, and she knew it I taught her a lesson not to strike people behind their back's. Now didn't I get a reprimanding I rolled her in it, but it soon blew over and we were all friendly again. I can tell you we used to have some snow in them days, there is nothing like it now I will tell you it was one Sat morning he said I have a nice little job for you it had been a very deep snow that week, and he said its all riding, I want you to take a wagon to the wheelwrights at Floor it was quite five miles each way, when all was ready I was put in the wagon and started off. I scarsly knew wich rein to pull as I had not used a horse before as I

This work is openly licenced via CC BY-NC-SA 4.0.
https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-sa/4.0/

(29)

was going to say I passed through many parts were the snow was much higher than the wagon and had been dug out and at one place they had dug out a cabin and got seats and had their meals there sitting on snow. After a lot of slipping about I arrived there safely but nearly froze to death then the old man put me up on the horse a started me back and after slipping first one way and then the other I arrived safely back. Now later on I had another job nearly frightened out of my wits they had been thrashing and in the old day they had have someone to flag the machanical vehicle the job is to walk in front of the engine and carry a red flag and if you were to meet any restless horses you was to stop the show and lead them past. This act was in power untill

This work is openly licenced via CC BY-NC-SA 4.0.
https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-sa/4.0/

(30)

just recently. I wonder how boys would like that today at thirteen years to go nine miles from home and getting dark then. How I got home I dont know I was scared to death in the dark, the would do them good Motors had to come under that act at first and they soon left it off not because you could not keep up with them at first as many got stuck on the road. Later I had my first sample of clodhopping to sample. This is another thing of the past walking over great clods of earth many larger than horses heads and turning two great cart horses each end. Yes the very thought of it would break the heart of many of the rising generation, if they have one. Now if you were to ask my opinion about it, I should gamble borstil is heaven compared with that what boys went through. Still

This work is openly licenced via CC BY-NC-SA 4.0.
https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-sa/4.0/

(31)

we were happy enough. I just laugh at the hard times they have now pampered up untill they are about twenty, and drifting from bad to worse each year crime everywhere, and street corner meetings, many not able to read a deacent book. When I was in my teens I was allowed to attend a reading room two nights a week and a dancing class one night and a temperance meeting one thing or other making it a plesant time for winter evenings. Having an old harmonium at home I got a very slight insight of music so at these meeting I used to torment the piano and also the organ suffered the same fate as I was never master of either. I had no music in me like my oldest Bro he was a pro and could play any thing he was Organist many years where

This work is openly licenced via CC BY-NC-SA 4.0.
https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-sa/4.0/

(32)

he lived. I was not satisfied tormenting these instriments I also made the violin utter some painfull notes. I also had a cornet that I nearly blew strait with little effect toward a tune. Now I think I really got the best music out of a side drum of any instrument I tried, in fact I did not get out of tune with it. Ohone more thing I had a go at I liked to hear tintinnabulation so I went to church for a year or so and pulled at the ropes, but I soon got tired of that. So I returned to the temperance meetings again so I must tell you of one incident that made me smile many times, now the leader was a very energetic strict temperance advocate, well we were about to close the meeting, when he announced we will sing little drops of water and pray put plenty of spirit into it. Now

This work is openly licenced via CC BY-NC-SA 4.0.
https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-sa/4.0/

(337)

I like to put a spot of humour it whenever possiable. All the same we are moving just a little, I am now leaving farm work for ever I hope I was not sorry that the farmer was, it was nothing but a slave job for a boy in those days. He was going to try to stop me by writing to Lord Spencer but he was not successful. My next situation was at Althorp I was then called pony boy I had one pony to look after it was used especially for a large grass machine at taking all my time in the summer. I found it very nice to walk on a soft carpet all day after the heavy land. I had a marvelous old man at the machine he was over eighty but very active and could spin round the flower bed faster than many at twenty today. Now I had strict orders from Countess Spencer to-

This work is openly licenced via CC BY-NC-SA 4.0.
https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-sa/4.0/

(34)

take it easy and sit down any time we wished most days she would come out for a walk and would come and have a chat with us and I heard her tell him distinctly times to rest more often. I well remember on one occasion we were not cutting but cleaning up the grass we had a very large light barrow and taking our usual rest I sat in the barrow, and the old man still liking a bit of fun tipped it over, of course I was completely in a box, and shouting to come out. Now there are many small plantings in the gardens, and who ~~should and who~~ should come around one but her Ladyship and got with in a yard or two of us befor we knew, I hope you are not hurting the lad she said, no My Lady the old man said only just a bit of fun and she walked strait away. She was a grand Lady allway had a

This work is openly licenced via CC BY-NC-SA 4.0.
https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-sa/4.0/

(35)

smile for you. You know she allways had several dogs quite small they was and then occasionally a rabbit would would trespass in the garden, of course with a little hole cut in the wire to let them in out of the park (and then close it up again) and then you in for some sport for her dogs could ever catch one, at the same time we used to help them. I well remember one time in particular how I amused her, there was a large rose garden wired in and rabbits are very fond of them, so of corse that wire had to have a hole in and when the dogs chased them in they went and I knew by their barking there was one, and she was there; how she laughed and shouted chase it Wadsworth I did and caught it and many more, you had to get them tired out before you got them and so was I jumping over rose beds. Still she said well done.

This work is openly licenced via CC BY-NC-SA 4.0.
https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-sa/4.0/

(36)

A thorp used to be alive during the summer there were school treats about three day a week and most parties had a band, it used to be grand, and liven the old place up. When these were on the garden's used to be open for the cream of the parties. Now these were shown around by the old gardener and many were the tips he got. To one day I thought it a bit thick him having all the cream so I let him get on with his party, then I invited a party of young girls and marched them around I had to get them over the fence, still I did, and did'nt he say when he got Back he was not used to missing his filthy lucre. One of my young ladies was a Miss Mamford I think it was the one Dr Jones married she was very nice. As time went on I had better class work, had to don slippers and help do the decorating in the house each morning. Now I used to think it pecular how he used

This work is openly licenced via CC BY-NC-SA 4.0.
https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-sa/4.0/

(37)

to start me off each morning just before he came, but at last I found out the reason. Do you know our room for working in was called the serving room and it was ajoining the dining room and another room was near ours were the wine was stored and it appears the old man has stayed behind to help himself each day, at last they began to notic a leakage, and one morning a footman concealed himself in a cupboard opposite sprung out and caught him red handed he had a bottle to his mouth I well remember what an upset it was. Me and the gardener were at work near the house when the red East rode out on his arab horse he used, he made a ring round him untill I thought he would strike the old man with his whip. When he came to me afterwards he said his Lordship thought it was a large temtation that

This work is openly licenced via CC BY-NC-SA 4.0.
https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-sa/4.0/

(38)

I knew was a lie because I could hear some of the conversation but he never got the same chance again. I went in and helped other gardeners as usual, there used to be a cart load of flowers each morning when she was there. My word what a place that was for living in those day's, each morning when I had finished I had to pass what was called the still room thats where they make tarts and cake's and all fancy stuff there was allways something ready for me, and I still can tast the lovely cake I had. Now in those day's there was a wonderfull old blind man worked there walked from Brington each morning, he was a marvel when he got there he would walk strait to a big opening down several step's no handrail there he would chop sticks fill all baskets for each room take them up left each day, also all coat hook's and take them

This work is openly licenced via CC BY-NC-SA 4.0.
https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-sa/4.0/

(39)

up lift he also got in hundreds of tuns of coal and coak and had to take it under the house he never had a mistake. No body evould ever believe the passages there are under that house I should say quite a mile. Going back to the decorating I wish I could discribe some of the beautifull plants, they had all the best tropical variety that could be grown in England and special pits were used for them and had to be very hot. I may say there are few gardens were they did things like we used, strawberry's all the year round, and hundred of pines large one too they were and I dont supose many in England could grow them if they wished. Now sometime later the old gardener was ill and it was the time Mr Gladstone was on a visit to Althorp and his Lordship wanted him to plant a tree

This work is openly licenced via CC BY-NC-SA 4.0.
https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-sa/4.0/

(40)

before he left, so me and another man got the hole out ready, and tree ready and assisted with the planting Mr Gl thanks us and said he hoped it would grow, but my mate said cefter, no I'll see it never does and it neve did. My mate was an old time serving soldier and said he had forgot to wet it the stump marked the spot for many years but no life, the Red Eart was very disapponted Now I may tell you how I enjoyed the time I spent at Althorp some people may try to make you believe you are living in paradice now, but make no mistake its nothing like it was fifty years ago. The freedom from worry was worth going back to alone, my only drawback was walking each way to work. Now I had been a bit careful and got a few shillings just as cycles got about but not the sort you see now, for they were as much as

This work is openly licenced via CC BY-NC-SA 4.0.
https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-sa/4.0/

(41)

you could lift; tyres about a thick only all solid rubber no wind in them so to be up to dale I made my first purchase it came from Coventry and cost seven guineas I paid for it at the same time. One or two others had one in the village and we used to take some long rides on Sunday and arrive home "dead beat" as they say for we where they were to heavy. Not long after that the penny farthing came out and my word they were dangerous machines. I have seen fellows when learning to ride them take them to the top of a steep hill and come down the hill like mad and go clean over hedges I dont know if you have any idea about them but they were made to measure the taller the man the taller the machine. It was not long after this when I began to ride on air I well remember the first one I rode I had

This work is openly licenced via CC BY-NC-SA 4.0.
https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-sa/4.0/

(42)

not been fortunate enough to possess one; in fact a fellow in the village bought two and he wanted company so I rode one at that time he was getting a colection of moths and butterflies so we used to go off with our nets exploring in the woods. I had no idea what various kind of moths there were untill I started out with him, we used to go as far as Everton and Badby where we were fortunate enough to get some rare specimen, especially moths you would never see them in the ordinary way unless you knew were to look they were as large as a tom tit, but they were tiring rides on the roads them days as I said before they used to put the stones on in winter and rake them out in summer that made the bad. At the same time I may say roadmen were wocker in those days as they had to wheel hundreds

This work is openly licenced via CC BY-NC-SA 4.0.
https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-sa/4.0/

(43)

of tins on the road, it would make many faint today, I have seen some of them ~~some~~ draw their brush along to idle to carry it. Well time moves on as it was just about this time cars made their appearance and I well remember the sport we used to have watching them try to get up the hills, many a time I have seen three or four struggling to get them up the hills, pushing behind. One thing after another helped to liven things up a little. Sports started had now started in the village and at one time the were about the finest team in England and very few teams could do anything with them. It was allway very difficult to get the two end of the village to hang together there was allway a little antagonism between them, and many free fights I have seen between them. I well remember a small

This work is openly licenced via CC BY-NC-SA 4.0.
https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-sa/4.0/

(44)

goon down what was termed lower end, now that night was intended for a night, and we had a particular good boxes with us and were ready for anything, but as we were walking peacably up through the village we were just opposite the blacksmiths shop when a fellow started his lip a usual, and struck the wrong fellow we all knew he would regret it, and he did in less than a minut he received one under the chin, it lifted clean off the earth, and he dropped like a stone. His parents arrived raving and said you have killed my boy and a party carried him indoors, we had very little trouble for a time after that, but it was not finished with for the used stones after that and we had a real battle with one or two crack's. now for myself I never had many pal's I allways prefered to move about in

This work is openly licenced via CC BY-NC-SA 4.0.
https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-sa/4.0/

(45)

my own sphere as I had many hobby's and that used to keep me at home most nights tinkering about trying to make furniture or manufacture something I well remember making a ladder for one thing it was a bit of a freak but it is still in use I sold to our neighbour next door and he still uses it after about sixty years. I was chiefly interested in carpentry and often wonder why I was not one but I expect its the same old tale expence putting me apprentice, but I could still surprise a gor many now as I have had a good deal to do with my other work on the estate. It may also interest anyone that reads this, I have taken three first for that trade at home and at exibition's at Northampton, I have heard that the Duke of Grafton still has the horse I made, allthough I say it

This work is openly licenced via CC BY-NC-SA 4.0.
https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-sa/4.0/

(46)

it was a beauty. I dont know if I told you I was also caretaker at the chapel and spent several nights a week there what with cutting hedges and weeding paths took a long time and many little repairs I did for them and attended to lamps did all lighting and what an office that was to hold, and the kind of thanks I got was groused at by most of them. Well every day I got older and as you may expect several young ladies began to give me the glad eye and now let me warn you this is the time you want to be carefull or you may make a life mistake, thousands do, take little notice of their smiles as they are often deceitful and in those day I was very shy and I used to give them the go by. About this time we formed what we called the black and white minstrels and then

This work is openly licenced via CC BY-NC-SA 4.0.
https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-sa/4.0/

(47)

my time was about all took up in the winter evenings. I joined them but I was only a back number I was a poor help as I had no voice or nerve so I could not sing I certainly sat in the band with a violin scraping away but if you could have heard me you would have found it excruciating I am sure for they were some horrid notes I must say I tried many instruments but with out success thank goodness they played loud enough to drown mine. I think the only thing I was efficent at was selling programme and of corse I blacked my face, we visited several places and give concerts, one I well remember. (because they did not keep us I supose) anyway we got out asylum again. I may say how very easy they were to please, but it made you wonder why so many should be

This work is openly licenced via CC BY-NC-SA 4.0.
https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-sa/4.0/

(48)

that way afflicted, hundreds in that great hall big strong men some laughing some never took the slightest notice, still many enjoyed it and show their ~~is~~ appreciation they showered packets of tobaco oranges apples on the platform and for doing this the poor begger got marched off back to their room and heard no more of the entertainment I felt sorry for them for they could not help it. Now it was about this time I changed my employment allthough a little indefference with my bos I kneed not have done only I was not one of them sort to humble myself, not me, he told me to be done the end of the week I thanked and packed up and he was not long after me I knew he would not be, he accused me being late he told the Agent so I told him the

This work is openly licenced via CC BY-NC-SA 4.0.
https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-sa/4.0/

(49)

reason he encouraged me to go and stop late at his house and he used to come home about midnight about full of drink that put matters allright but not for him. Now I started bricklaying, and I was not long before I could do the job very well and found it very interesting I can assure you at that time we did most of the jobs piece work, and I can tell you we had to work thouse day and used to lay more in a day than they lay in two now we had to work very hard and what we got extra was not a lot and it was all rush to lay one thousand a day. Really that was the worst of estates they paid a very small wage. But there were other advantges you got a cottage for about one shilling a week so put one thing with another you were just as

This work is openly licenced via CC BY-NC-SA 4.0.
https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-sa/4.0/

(50)

well off. I can tell you it was about as much as my nerves could stand when I first started to mount a fifty reaung ladder and stand on the top of a chimney for we had some very tall ones and that is most important work about propety, for if you allow them to fall you are soon going to have trouble with the ~~o~~ wojo. I soon mastered it allthough I must admit I was a bit nervy to the last day I worked another thing our trade included every branch of the trade its not like an ordinary bricklayer he ~~dy~~ only possesses about three tools we have to own more than you could put on a wheelbarrow Once again I can tell you of another rather large job I had a St Albans I had to take complete ~~ge~~ charge of the contract it was to sewer a large dairy farm and there was no slipping anything there

This work is openly licenced via CC BY-NC-SA 4.0.
https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-sa/4.0/

(51)

as all the work had to be inspected twice by the City surveyor, all had to be tested twice, and the job run well into four figures I set on and sacked as I wished bos coming about every three weeks I may say we had a nice time it gave me a chance to visit a few friends I had, and I think the men had the best job they had ever had on the estate and the most money as I give them plent of overtime. Another large job I had at Church Brampton was to remove an entire set of farm buildings and re-red them on another farm, it took nearly twelve months although we had a large staff of men, and a person in Brampton paid all expences because they spoil their view. Mind you I am not telling you for just stumping, I am just telling you what a test it was after changing jobs. Now I allmost forgot one job I took on

This work is openly licenced via CC BY-NC-SA 4.0.
https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-sa/4.0/

(52)

It was the longest I have had yet and I cannot see the end of it and about the only got that beat on me so its no good bealing about the bush, a Lady kidnaped me, at the same time she denoyes it, to this day, being a crommellite once she got her teeth in she never let go again. But here is the most pecular thing about it, I had two of the Bots in view at the same time, but you know Bots are swat one another turn up I really think they must have been swarming. Still I was satisfied with the one I chase. Now my troubles were not finished with in fact they had only just begun. One thing I cannot understand is all this fus about houses I mean in forty six for it was just as bad forty years ago I had to take rooms many years after I was married and there were out of Harlstone, but we live in

This work is openly licenced via CC BY-NC-SA 4.0.
https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-sa/4.0/

(53)

in a unsellled world and many with unsettled mentality seem to run the show. In the first place what is the use of encourage people to have large familes when they have nowhere to put them no only a imbecile would think of such a thing. Havent we seen enough of that for years poverty bloodshed unemployment robery and many other thing such as illnes, all these result from large familes, to say nothing of canon fodder. But apart from that its a most wicked thing method of taxing a respectable man with one or two to keep a litter of some one else's. What I should like to suggest X is to discourage any woman having more than four, when it comes to teens well they are lower than cattle. Beer plays a large part in this sort of thing.

This work is openly licenced via CC BY-NC-SA 4.0.
https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-sa/4.0/

(54)

for drunken people know very little about what they are doing, and thats where you find your low bred stock, yes you say but they often do well, I admit but often its nothing but ignorant cheek that gets them through, Well as I am in the Autumn of my days I think I have no need to bother about it, only one thing I am certain, they are running head first to ruin. One in every ten born today are born out of wedlock and nothing said so long as the government get the stock, so that the birthrate's booming but its wonderfull how this class is encouraged and helped by everybody I have known them when they have been farmer's, but as I write this they are doing extremely well beautifull homes where they get everything heart can wish for and if necessary their baby gets

This work is openly licenced via CC BY-NC-SA 4.0.
https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-sa/4.0/

(55)

adopted and they go off again like ladies.
No I must not forgot I spent some of
my time in the army, at that time I thought
was a wast of life, but after I had got
settled I somewhat changed my mind, and
afterwards spent many happy day down
in sussex. Still I may as well begin at
the begining, in the first place I arrived
at Northampton Barracks and what a
vile place for a start treated on a level
to cattle, I expect most people know
what a mouthing lot those stay
at homes were at that time it was
full of old screws and got more stump
than any fellows who had been to the
war. But again I know they raked up
every old screw they could find, hence
I shoul not have been there I shall not
forget my first meal there anyway and
for my breakfast I had whole bloater

This work is openly licenced via CC BY-NC-SA 4.0.
https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-sa/4.0/

(56)

we were soon dressed up after a fashion and what a sample I shall never forget the gang for some of them you could see through one had laid out of doors months a tramp another from the brewery about twenty stone well you can just amagine what he was like for they had nothing in the way of clothing to fit him so he had to go as he was, still they had not done enough humiliating us they had to send a band to play us to the station I think there was fourteen of us. Again I wonder how many times her I has more got insulted people yelling no more ~~skipp~~ they knew him about town where he delivered beer. From here we were booked to Aldershot and a Jar was sent with from there we were sent to a place called Marefield it was a Geman's house and park and he skiped

This work is openly licenced via CC BY-NC-SA 4.0.
https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-sa/4.0/

(57)

off just one day before they went to get him but what a fine house and park he had been living in he was suspected being a German spy, be that as it may they just missed him. I well remember helping to remove some of the furniture and as we were taking a table along a passage put one leg through a oil painting, as a matter of fact he had to leave everything behind he possessed, horses, Cars, in fact all, and left by plane one day before war was proclamed. My next move was to that whitley and if you have ever been there you will agree with me what a beautifull part that is, it is close to Gilford, but the pine woods are grand. And about the troop's well there was twenty thousand laying there and what a nice smart lot they were and so good natured they used to have many

This work is openly licenced via CC BY-NC-SA 4.0.
https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-sa/4.0/

(58)

parcels come from home, Canada to the camp and they would share it out to all of us. I can tell you it was a fine camp for living as they had all their own food sent from home I shall never see anything like it again I am afraid. I may as well tell you from the beginning that lot had been sent there and completely lost site of I know its the truth but I dont know just how many years they were there, bands I never saw such a lot and the even had their own picture palace, in fact there was not a single thing one had to go out of camp for. At last came the rude awakening, and if you know what stuff them chaps are made of you can guess as they were mad to get at Jerry I have seen a many as a hundred on EB they could do nothing with them they were over drilled and would not

This work is openly licenced via CC BY-NC-SA 4.0.
https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-sa/4.0/

(59)

turn out in the rain. Well to finish up they had a grand slam burnt down the picture palace and half the camp before they went out to the war. Now my next move was to Aldershot and what a change my first start was to attach me to a horse regiment but I wasn't having any, they give me a barrow and many other tools and a strip of paper about a yard long and a Seargant Major to look after me, he showed me the stable and that was all and I never did start, and did not intend to, I can tell you, are you going to start no thats not my trade and I am not doing it. So again I was to have a fresh S M and marched off to the Royal Engineer's it appeared the horse regiment wanted a copper built for hot water and brass mash, well if you had ~~had~~ seen how that poor ignorant ass

This work is openly licenced via CC BY-NC-SA 4.0.
https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-sa/4.0/

(60)

marked it out you would still be
laughing at him, at last I could stand
it no longer, and told him thats not the
way to build I've built hundreds, I can hear
him now he did not half open his early
doors he was like all the rest he had got
his job according to the size of his mouth.
But what a shame that any country
should ever have to depend on such lousy
men as them, sorry I said men so I
had to spoil it. Now I dont think I should
be telling you a lie if I was to say
at that time there was a I/M to every
soldier. I myself had one each morning
but you did not see them after that.
After that I had a good job for a week
or two I had to meet a I/M with the
usual paper about a yard long that
would be about nine o'clock then
we should look out a few tools and

This work is openly licenced via CC BY-NC-SA 4.0.
https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-sa/4.0/

(61)

wheelbarrow brush & I'll and move off to some quiet place, there I should be told to wait untill he had seen so and so about the job; nothing doing. eventually he would clear off about twelve and I should have orders to meet him here again at two, but many days they did not turn up again and I did this for days, God only knows where they were resurrected from and what a wast of expense for they had colected every old loafer from all over England and dumped them there, there was another thing they would be dangerous in any fighting line for most of them were rather different from the ordinary men, as most of them had cultivated a luminous dial, but I expect it was just a touch of ingestion as many call it. For a time again I got on the building staff and a very

This work is openly licenced via CC BY-NC-SA 4.0.
https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-sa/4.0/

(62)

skilled job it was, I had to make
a model of the training trenches in
concreat; it was a grand job I can
tell you and the only boss wan the
head man of the Southern Comand he
used to come and have a look several
times a day. I dare say it would be about
thirty yard long and ten yards wide:
it was a copy of the trenches at a place
called clapcard hill this is how I did
it, I had a large quantity of long nails
and stiff brown paper ~~for the~~ to form
the trenches and peices of slate for steps
for dugouts, every thing had to be shown
on it and it took me many weeks as
soon as I had finished it the used
to bring a crowd there each morning
for instruction, I have no doubt that
many farmilour with Aldershot may
have seen it as it was not far from

Autobiography of a Yokal
by Ernest Wadsworth, edited by Francis Howcutt © 2024
This work is openly licenced via CC BY-NC-SA 4.0.
https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-sa/4.0/

the garrison church and all that time my only Boss was the old Colonel. You would have laughed had you seen some of the I'm's hanging their mouths as they had no voice in it, but they did their best to sneek on but I was taking no orders from them. I also had another large stage made of boards but that worked with sand and that we used nails and cardboard, that was used to show the advance in the war each day. I have not forgot the old Colonel words when I had finished how he thanked me and said he would try and get me on the staff if I would like him to. But I went from there to the bombing school from there and gas school, we used to run these two together this was a very dangerous job and we had some very bad accidents

This work is openly licenced via CC BY-NC-SA 4.0.
https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-sa/4.0/

(64)

one of the worst ive had I had the job gathering up parts of the man and burying them in the wood near by, but it was chiefly hands and that sort of thing and much of it through carelessness as they happened. I find I have pumped one job before the bom's I had so many I really have a job to think of them all. I was in charge of a mess for a long time two hundred that is a busy job if you like to make it one. you get two or three hours after dinner for a walk or sleep just as you like. Now that is a job that you can soon get into trouble over if you are not careful, well I did and it was over feeding them to well but I did not mind that as many of them had been out once and they deserved good food. Now the way I used to work it I used to dish out so

This work is openly licenced via CC BY-NC-SA 4.0.
https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-sa/4.0/

(65)

I had several left and nothing for them so I used to send for the mess Tar and after a storm I would get several tins of bully and I made sure to keep one or two by me. And by this scheme I got them more each day I had the key of the stores and could really get what I wanted. But there was another fly in the ointment as they say the Tar had his wife staying there like many more and these had to be fed out of the rations, one thing I did if possible I used to give every man a tin of bully when he went on leave. Now I allways made it a practice to go to the stores for my supper and had a few hanger's on I may say, but one night and a very dark night it was too I could not get my key in so after a moments thought I found one in the door, so I promptly

This work is openly licenced via CC BY-NC-SA 4.0.
https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-sa/4.0/

(66)

turned it and I had captured a prisoner, and did I unlock the door until he told me his name, "No" and who should it be but the mess Sarg and would you believe it he was looking out rations for his wife who was staying in town, do you know we had a consignment of tined mutton come in and not one slice was issued to the men, I had a bit and it was grand I can tell you. That was not all we used to boil a copper full of bum's each week, and I know at least two of them went each week and sold anyway the mem never had them. I usually went to see each draft off, and I dont think one went without telling me. they wished I was going to look after their food as I give them all I could get. Well I must be getting back to my tale at last we got a little cottage although

This work is openly licenced via CC BY-NC-SA 4.0.
https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-sa/4.0/

(67)

it lacked many comforts, and I spent much time improving it, and alot at my own expence. I had a rather good garden after I had spent much time improving it as much of was on the rock one part, this part I built a hen roost and a large wire run covered in completely with wire, as its the safest way, so this was my first experience as a landlord. This was not got to last for very long as I was offered a good job at Brampton this I think I was very wise to accept as I was more or less my own master there and not easy far away I was able to get over home most weeks just to give them a look in, at the same time I never did like the cycle. Some of the Farmers groumbled rather bad at loosing me one named Bramley said he was going to write to Lord Spencer I never knew if he

This work is openly licenced via CC BY-NC-SA 4.0.
https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-sa/4.0/

(68)

did or not, anyway I never heard any different, nor did I want as there was a much better chance of getting on here as you had to take on all jobs as they came; and I can assure you I have had a few restless nights a few times. Well I may tell you a man sees many changes in fifty years on farms and I may say many of them not for the best they certainly get over it quicker today but often with poor results. I could tell you some wicked things I have seen farmers do, one in particular that was one named Rowell he had killed one man, now number two was for it, this poor chap was so weak he dare not speak to him whatever he did. Well he lived in a cottage just one hundred yards from the farm and he threatened to sack him if he caught him going

This work is openly licenced via CC BY-NC-SA 4.0.
https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-sa/4.0/

(69)

home to meals. Now it happened I
wanted a cart sending for some building
material and when he got to Brampton
I could see how ill he was so took as
much care of him as I could and when
we got back I said to the rotter do
you know this man's very ill and
if you had heard him rave and swear
you would not have forgotten it
for many a day, as soon as we got
there I ordered him strait home and
looked after cart myself and the
poor chap never come out no more
untill he was carried out that was
the second he had killed but living
at such a remote spot he got away
with it to a ceratain extent, but I boomed
his character up well ever after at that
time I think we had three of the
drunkest men living they were pals

This work is openly licenced via CC BY-NC-SA 4.0.
https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-sa/4.0/

(70)

this Rowell and a Farmer named Garnes and a man named Barry the were seldom sober. A few years later this man Rowell had all his ricks and machines destroyed by fire this he started himself while the men were at dinner he had very little kit any use but it was all set in ready for it, of course I had rush off to try and save some of the buildings and the first man I see when I got there was the old bas, he said its a pity I said yes as it was not your house too so that was all the sympathy he got from me. Well I think we will let other's rest as I could tell you more that would make you shudder. As I have given up work after working on the farm more than fifty years - I have no need to bother my little brain about it you know as well

This work is openly licenced via CC BY-NC-SA 4.0.
https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-sa/4.0/

(71)

as I do it was slavery the cleverest knaves scoped up all the filthy lucre and left no other alternate remedy so it started and it appear it took all the years to alter it. Of cours you know the reason its the house of Lords what has been holding up all. Its the boosey lot that visit the house simply to destroy the work we pay others to do. And again, what about the mentality of this gang we know quite well that some are little touched, especially the Lord's spiritual by many of their recent speaches on communism, no man could very well be a christian and associate with a gang of robbers like them for they have little brains and are out to rob every one that one has only look at our stately homes that have been destroyed by them and ask yourself if you would like them

This work is openly licenced via CC BY-NC-SA 4.0.
https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-sa/4.0/

(72)

to have a dip at your little bit and
it is just the same they are out for.
Now its a funny thing I often think that
law turnes a blind eye to this sort
of thing when only a few years they
used to hang them for steaking a sheep
and many want it today as the country
about full of them, apart from being
thieves they seem to be many of them
get their liveing without much work
and make sure of spending it
some beautifull spot by the sea and
who are the fools that keep them
ask yourself then you will know
as it comes out of your paypacked
each week, and what is it for well
its just to cause a disturbance of the
peace, for these they lock many up
for, but the mistake was made
when they give the worker the rein

This work is openly licenced via CC BY-NC-SA 4.0.
https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-sa/4.0/

(73)

and should have been nipped in the bud, but who now dare to cast the first stone now. What is wanted is a parliment that dare arrest them by the hundred, as its not a bit of good in small numbers and let the lot strike and keep them out and mask the devils once and for all for they are the cause of everything being the price that they are today and there's not a man can deny it. Well I can say our family has been connected with Brampton very many years before I came to live here probably hundreds of years, the Blunts, and Spencers were once related. Many years my father worked here before me and helped build many cottages one block are the one near woodyard and also the cottages in the allotments now

This work is openly licenced via CC BY-NC-SA 4.0.
https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-sa/4.0/

(74)

these are very historic as they were built with stone brought up from pub that used to stand near the old tollgate called the fish. It was rather a out of the was for a pub, but in those days they were called road house's if I am not mistaken. Now one more job my Father and two more men did was to plant the two rows of fir trees from Chapel to Church bramptor perhaps you have noticed how the distance between them varies. Well M Father and another man named Baldwin were little short men and a man named Dent was over six feet and each time they was supose d to step one yard at a time so the tall man yard was about three feet six and the others two feet six hence the difference. Now after working on the old firm for

This work is openly licenced via CC BY-NC-SA 4.0.
https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-sa/4.0/

(75)

fifty years I have been forced to retire owing to rotten health. Now I have allways held peculiar views about human nature, what often perplexes me is why "human beings" should ever have started to be treated worse than cattle. Now take a horse for instance with its enormous strength only allowed to work a few hours and beasts that used to work get off scot free. There's certainty something gone wrong many years back the worker started and it appears he never left off, yet at the same time I am sure if every man did his bit all the work could be done in four days a week now you just watch the men we send to parliament and think of the few hours they work and I bet with a little push could be all

This work is openly licenced via CC BY-NC-SA 4.0.
https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-sa/4.0/

(76)

done in two months. I used to smile to hear them talking about absentee at different times and said then that they should put their own house in order before talking of other workers, what they should be made to clock in same as others and only paid for what they do. There's one thing I notice they are allowed to run their pub on the deficet side and at the same time make law's for bankrupts why are the not prosecuted like other people, they seem to have got a boosy lot this last few years. I dont know if I have mentioned the Mores they were farmers and a queer old fashioned lot they were and had some funny ways I remember they had a very large old fashioned kitchen and used to take pieces of wood ten feet long in never used

This work is openly licenced via CC BY-NC-SA 4.0.
https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-sa/4.0/

(77)

to saw them push them on as they burnt and you will say a very good idea and I can tell you some had forgot more than many young ones will ever know, and the reason is, they are stuffed with to much of the drink, that makes calfs have so little brains if you dont believe go on a farm and see for your self. Another job boys used to do that was brickyard work and had to walk about bare foot carrying away the brick that was to keep the sand smooth I also remember boys having to go up chimney to sweep them, that would do many good today and soon finish a few off. Well this brick job was done most of the year very often when it was on the point of freezing so you can judge for yourself what a tasty job it was anyway

my brother

This work is openly licenced via CC BY-NC-SA 4.0.
https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-sa/4.0/

(78)

he was not at it very long and made his way ahead and for many years was his own master but his downfall was like thousands more, he had a dry spark in his throat that only one kind of liquid would quench. It would do many of the young hooligans more good than borstal give them a turn at that. I am afraid I am getting off my tale again, but being in the first world war I know that British officers were entertaining German officers wives when these men folk were waiting to be hung, the rotters they should have had a packet like my brother had that would have kept them out of mischief, many of this class at the same time had not the guts to fight tommy was stuck in front to save them. I've been abused many times for

This work is openly licenced via CC BY-NC-SA 4.0.
https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-sa/4.0/

(79)

saying it, but we have a breed in England that foster war by their cancerous blood lust and their craving for wealth at the same time trying to appear like Angles in sheeps clothing. just a murder started one war I remember that should have been settled in about a hour. I can get honour from heathen race's and seem to think that is something grand and boom it up well and ~~and~~ feel well satisfied by what they have done. Well I am afraid I have run away from my subject again but I really cannot help it as I have many thing in mind I wish to say I am like many other's I have a conscious and mean to express it, that's what everyone should do then we should know were we stand.

This work is openly licenced via CC BY-NC-SA 4.0.
https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-sa/4.0/

(80)

Drifting back to my retirement ten years back I have found it very difficult to settle down as I think I spent my working and spare time far different from the majority of working men, in the first place as my wife will tell you I used to leave home very early and sometimes home midday and if not, it was usually a late tea I may say that did not last long and I was off again as I allways had plenty to do, you will understand this after tea work was just a hobby one was a lathe and did a bit of wood turning, made a few wheelbarrow's, a did a good many carpenter's job's and I was never so happy as when I had a tool of this sort in my hand, so you

This work is openly licenced via CC BY-NC-SA 4.0.
https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-sa/4.0/

(81)

will understand I never had
a lot of use for indoors, and now
it makes it hard to live inside.
There certainly is one remady for
it and I was sure to find it, and
that was illness and that has laid
me down fairly well now; oh I
really forgot about gardening
in the summer I had much to
do with the greenhouse a keeping
that in order and one time I used
to have a good trade with that and
sell thousands of bedding plants
I may say this was one of the
most profitable side line's I had,
really I had so manny the are
to ~~back~~ numerous to mention. Well
I must say I cut a poor figure now
and very often have a difficult job
to walk for rheumatism for a few
days

This work is openly licenced via CC BY-NC-SA 4.0.
https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-sa/4.0/

(82)

then it leaves me free, its a most peculiar complaint, be that as it may I supose we have all got to have our wack of something or other. Well I may say I have been married over fifty years and I have seen some changes I can tell you, especially at my work as its taken me into most houses in several villages and you would be surprised at the differend kind of people I have had to deal with, some cival, some not and many times I had restless nights thinking best way to oblige them. But again I dont really beleive there's a man living who thoroughly understand a woman, stops from a to Z. and if you could please them, you were really fit for a better world

This work is openly licenced via CC BY-NC-SA 4.0.
https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-sa/4.0/

(83)

but I am afraid there would be very few pass out, this I do know that they never forget old grudge and I have known some to last as long as forty years and still a sore spot. Well lets hope it does them good. Now the present generation I am utterly disgusted with, I mean the butterfly class, to see the thousands just over seventeen many of them married just to indulge in idleness and to push their first born about a few years and then they mean to settle down contented while poor hubby toils to worship them, this I think is a rotten waste of labour, but no times have altered and they are not going to have it, at the same time they are talking about equality poor things but what can they do we have seen enough of that.

This work is openly licenced via CC BY-NC-SA 4.0.
https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-sa/4.0/

(84)

where they have got in power
they are an hindrance to progress,
well so much for the female sex
I expect we shall allways be obliged
to have them as they have to produce
the rising generation such as it
is, as I think it has deteriorated
very much this last fifty years as
we were good strong men at eighteen,
and now they are still on the
bottle and we C A P have to help
keep them out of four and seven
pence a day while seventy
five per cent are spending more than
that a day on cigs I suppose when
you read this you will say that's
all as it should be I can tell you
you there would be no cosh
boy if they had their liberty when young and
could go and roam about on

This work is openly licenced via CC BY-NC-SA 4.0.
https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-sa/4.0/

(85)

farm's like we used to do, for its nothing but idleness that breeds crime and bad character's. Another thing there are so many attraction's such as boxing that dont improve them very much as they seem to think they can crow over everybody, and nothing in the world but this bad system of teaching introduced by the labour party is the cause of it all, when you begin to tell children they can do as they like then its all up you loose all controll over them, and they become their own schoolmaster's and at the same time under no parental control at home what do they expect to be when they grow up, if I had my way they should be put to a severe test before they should

become

This work is openly licenced via CC BY-NC-SA 4.0.
https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-sa/4.0/

(86)

fathers need you wonder at them having to build homes for sub-normals all the time, I can tell you old England will go to the dog's if not watched very carefull. Every young man should be made to read Namoi Jacob's Cup of Youth for one thing, and then he would see what he is up against, and would probably put a bit of sence in him as there is a vast difference between just love and excitement, that only last's for a few years. I know it is really a wast to ever to suggest them a book like that because when they had read it they would be no more intelligent (if able to do so) and what we read in the reports many would

This work is openly licenced via CC BY-NC-SA 4.0.
https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-sa/4.0/

(87)

not be able and who was to
blame for this change the party
who said they must have what
they like at school and practically
everything out of the hand's of
the teachers, that is what they
tell me, if anyone thinks England
going to thrive on sport they should
see a Doctor as we have seen
plenty of that in nearly every
occupation, miner's work about
half time many of them and fill
up the rest at sport of some kind,
they are many others traded in
the same cart, want just
enough to pay their way each
week and still shouting for
higer wages and every rise
makes things worse for
everybody only many simple

This work is openly licenced via CC BY-NC-SA 4.0.
https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-sa/4.0/

(88)

people cannot see it that
way about and a pity too I
have just been reading they are after
more, but its the leaders who want
locking up and I dont know why
they are not, it wants one good strike
and it would stop this rot for
ever, they are are dirty lazy lot of
rotters kept entirly out of working
men's wages there are three classes
of them and many of them but
they could be tamed down by force
and a strong arm they go by many
a lush names but they are all the
same commonist at heart I have
been forced to belong to them for
many years and nobody know how
I regret it to belong to a disloyal E S
party They live in what they call
beautifull England and behave

This work is openly licenced via CC BY-NC-SA 4.0.
https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-sa/4.0/

(89)

like Russian bolshy's live for nothing only to try to bring it to the dog's by robery and other dirty ways filling their own pockets from others peoples safe's, and they are in not particular who rich or poor once they can lay their hand's on it, take the way they trod down the x service man who had saved a bit while in the army, no sooner had he bought his Bizzy out of was told he would only be allowed to go a far as they thought well, and in this way run him out of business not one but hundreds after they had fought for some who had flash jobs at home to save their valuable skins. Well I think I have let off enough steam about these spivs. I have one or to more little item's about Brempton just bits of history about Brampton—

This work is openly licenced via CC BY-NC-SA 4.0.
https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-sa/4.0/

(90)

I should like to record, now the old mill is about finished its job. what I can see of it, as all water is being taken from Northampton. I don't think many remember the old house that used to stand at the Station end. I should think its about fifty years since I demolished it, it was a quaint old place, the floors were about three feet below the present road and you could reach the bedroom windows quite easy and the law was across the road there were also cowshed's there at the time. The trouble with the house was when the floods came the people had to be taken out the bedroom windows in a wagon untill floods subsided and in those days sometimes lasted 4 or week's untill they put in extra

This work is openly licenced via CC BY-NC-SA 4.0.
https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-sa/4.0/

(41)

arches under the road, in them day the old road was down the park and crossed the back brook about 100 yards between that and the dam and out by the mill door, Another little bit of old history, is what is known as Tander's covert, not many really know that that was drilled by a ordinary drill and I should say it was just about the time I was born, at that time my father was along with the head keeper and to encourage the foxes to go there they put pipes underground well the keeper used to send him with rabbits for mi Fox but he put them to better use and as he came through L Brampton from the heath he turned them into a little extra money, I knew the

This work is openly licenced via CC BY-NC-SA 4.0.
https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-sa/4.0/

(92)

man quite well who drilled it he was a little short man and he allways went in the name of six foot goldby he lived at lower Harlestone. I see its several years since I started this bit of conflab and I have had many up and downs since then but still alive, but disappointed, as I inteded having a look around but have often been unable to go, so I try to fill up my time in this way at the same time I dont supose it will ever be looked at as I know some of it is a bit warm still I have a conscious and I am allowed to express it thats what everyone should do them we should know were we stand if noone cares to read it all well and good, I dont mind not in the least. Owing to hard times I see his Lordship

This work is openly licenced via CC BY-NC-SA 4.0.
https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-sa/4.0/

(93)

has to part with more property just by were we live, its jolly hard lines for people who had, and have still got brains should have their property stolen from them, by a brainless lot who are in a majority through ignorance, and its going to be much worse under the present labour education bill teaching games most of the day, while many of them dont know how to spell their own name, but its pure communism and nothing else, Well I dont think every man or woman has such little sence as not to be able to see through bunkum, this bombastic speechmaking, for the less they can educate the worker the better for their cause as we all know. I think I have got into the way of drifting into politics to often so now for a little more old history, this old Chapel

This work is openly licenced via CC BY-NC-SA 4.0.
https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-sa/4.0/

(94)

Brampton Changed hand in 1793 at that time it was quite a small place 30 house's ther was also two water mills in the parish, but were the second one was I dont know, unless it was the one called warrens an since that time the parish has been altered at the above date it consisted of 1330 &c and 30 houses and the rateable value was 1135£ that was the time Earl Spencer bought it. As for Church Brampton at that time, that was Bram Magno, and Bramtone in Dooms-day book, there was a lot of changing hands about that date. There was a chapel at chapel brampton but noone seems to know were it was and the old bell was on show at northampton years. There was a small chapel here for many years, but when a certain party

This work is openly licenced via CC BY-NC-SA 4.0.
https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-sa/4.0/

(95)

took over the old Posting house they did not want to hear any singing as they did not know Sunday from Monday so I had to build them a new one in the village, it was only supposed to be a temporary wooden building just for the time being but it has lasted many years, At the same time Earl Spencer promis-ed to build them one if ever it became necessary and I think it has there are a fair lot attend now, they do say what kept the old one going for so many years was the people that kept the public house next door they were quakers, and used to take them in after the service, be that so or nay I dont know. Another chang has occured all waterworks in Chapel Brampton have just been turned over to the waterboard so the old mill is quite idle now after hundreds of

This work is openly licenced via CC BY-NC-SA 4.0.
https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-sa/4.0/

(96)

~~work~~ it is I think about 80 years since
I changed it from a ~~wat~~ flour mill
to a water mill, and at that time it
was one of the best villag waterworks
in England I once had a book telling
all about it, and I lent it to the estate
office and lost it, I supose they found it
interesting, and took a fancy to it. I
think I just about had my little say
and the book will soon be full I have
saved one or two pages the for the late
events, since I started they have built
six council houses, these I never expected
to be seen built in Chapel Brampton and
there are many other changes many
people I do not know, several of
the cottages * have been filled with
estate workmen and are taken to
work from here and brought back
back at night that makes it very.
Nice

This work is openly licenced via CC BY-NC-SA 4.0.
https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-sa/4.0/

(97)

for them in the old day's we used to
have to walk miles to work but they get
tired much quicker in these day's, even
if they have an extra meal morning
and three in the afternoon, it is
verry difficult to understand the
temperament of the worker, as they seem
afraid they may do to much but all this
is owing to the trade union's I may also
say they have built several down mill
Lane, and are still building more in
1953. The red house as also change hands
twice since we built it and a very nice place
it is I still remember going to work up
Brampton Hill in Mr Sanders time but can-
not remember the date we did some drains
for him and a queer old fogey he was
I think Cooper of harlestone was his
brother, but Sanders had his name changed
by deed poll, at lest I have heard so

This work is openly licenced via CC BY-NC-SA 4.0.
https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-sa/4.0/

(98)

I have just looked up a bit more old history and I find the acreage is less in 1861 than in 1793 so I think they must have sold some it 1240 acres and the rateable valu had gone up £1954 the population in 1841 was 229 in 1861, 170. in 1871 205. I have often looked at the top of a arch when standing in the toll-gate garden it is just level with the soil and I find it is one of the old one before the road was made up it had six of them that was in 1409 just a day or two ago, at that time it belonged to people named Dyeres and then was bought by De Buctons it is still a mystery about the Church at Chapel Brampton I see the Lord Chancellor give his rents for the mills to the Church they were not a lot ii ii it here we can get no more information of its where abouts Church Brampton or Brampton

This work is openly licenced via CC BY-NC-SA 4.0.
https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-sa/4.0/

(99)

Magna as it was then called contained 1113 acres, Rateable value £1621 the population in 1801 was 173 in 1861 - 158. When Earl Spencer built these cottages he also built six cottages for poor widows these were in memory of his Mother and Father where are they today made into cottages and rented same as others and the village green has gone for ever. I notice a piece of new building to the church but there was a chancel there before and the new one was built on the old foundation. When they enclosed the commons I got 332 acres of it I think it was in the neighbourhood of Kingsthorpe chiefly and there was a bit of a bust up at the time. Brampton Church is one of a few dedicated to the memory of St Botolph who lived in the seventh century he was of German decent, the old stone staircase

This work is openly licenced via CC BY-NC-SA 4.0.
https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-sa/4.0/

(100)

formerly led to the rood-loft. I am allmost certain that the chapel used to stand where the Post Office is today, for when the water pipe was taken through they came on a foundation about 4 feet deep out in the main road and on a corner of it was 1 fine carved stone never been moved, and I have it on my rockery just like you see in Churches today, if it was so it was taken down to get the main road straight through, at that time the old road turned left straight down the park, as the mill lane was not there then the old elm tree's still mark the spot where the old road went down in park. They have no use for the old mill now near Brampton Station its many years been in use and now has become silent the last old miller to live there was J Blincow and he had been left left many years

This work is openly licenced via CC BY-NC-SA 4.0.
https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-sa/4.0/

when I demolished the cottage. There was a sheepwash there for many years where the Farmers used to bring them to wash before shearing, but I think this practice as died out now, they used to pay more for the wool if washed. Well I am still getting a little older seventy nine next time so I have seen a few changes in my time I can tell you and many are not for the better I am sorry to say, as for Bramptor they are getting mostly strangers and I know very few now

This work is openly licenced via CC BY-NC-SA 4.0.
https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-sa/4.0/

Commentary

Further information about individuals and places has been included below. The reference numbers at the start of each comment point to the numbers running from (1) to (101) that are written at the top of each page of Ernest Wadsworth's manuscript. They do not correspond with the numbers printed without brackets at the foot of every page of this edition.

Much about the history of Harlestone, clearly the result of extensive research in original sources, can be found in '*Village Roots – a History of Harlestone up to the Twentieth Century*' by Margaret Forrest (2009), a book referred to below as '*Village Roots*'.

(2) Harlestone House was built in 1715 and initially named Harlestone Park. Major alterations to the building were carried out between 1809 and 1811 along with landscaping of the grounds to designs by Humphrey Repton.

The mansion and associated estate were sold to the 4th Earl Spencer in 1832. Earl Spencer's principal home was at Althorp, so Harlestone House was occupied at various times by other members of the Spencer family and by tenants. The final resident, from 1891 until her death in 1928, was the Duchess of Grafton. The house was demolished in 1940.

(3) Ernest was the third of George & Adeline's children. All survived infancy so when he was young at least five people were living in the tiny cottage described.

(4) T Wilson – The 1871 census lists Thomas Wilson at Harlestone. He was a 60-year-old grazier who farmed 54 acres, employing three men and two boys. He was not recorded at Harlestone in 1881 census.

(6) The old pair next door – When the 1881 census took place, only one of the houses recorded before or after the Wadsworth home contained anyone older than Ernest's parents. The neighbours listed immediately before George and Adeline Wadsworth's household were Joseph Tarry, a 73-year-old labourer who had been born at Harlestone, and his wife Hannah who was a year younger and was born at Brington. Joseph Tarry's age was recorded as 80 when he was buried at Harlestone on 5 January 1888. Hannah Tarry was 82 when she was buried there on 21 January 1892.

Joseph Tarry of Harlestone and Hannah Battison of Brington had married at her parish church in 1826.

This work is openly licenced via CC BY-NC-SA 4.0.
https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-sa/4.0/

(6) Lady Southampton – Ismania Catherine Nugent (1838-1918), a daughter of Walter Nugent, was the second wife of Charles FitzRoy, 3rd Baron Southampton, who died in 1872. The 1881 census lists their five children (aged between 11 and 17) in residence at Harlestone House, along with nine resident servants. The children's mother was evidently elsewhere on the census night.

(8) Taty Wells – The 1871 census of Harlestone recorded Martha Wells at '*Beerhouse*', working as a beerseller. In 1881, she was still a beer retailer but ten years later described as a grocer. John Wells and Martha Irons, both of Harlestone, married at the parish church in 1859. John Wells died on 20 March 1870, leaving Martha a widow with three young children and expecting a fourth who was born 28 days later.

(11) Canon Bury – William Bury (1839-1927) was rector of Harlestone from 1882-1907. Details of his career can be found in '*Northamptonshire and Rutland Clergy from 1500*' by Rev Henry Isham Longden (Northampton 1938), Volume II, p. 327. https://www.familysearch.org/ark:/61903/3:1:3Q9M-CS8J-79XQ-L?i=288&cat=211404
On 27 May 1927, *Northampton Mercury* reported:

> *'Rev. William Bury, 87, formerly rector of Hazelbeech, and Harleston, whose death occurred at Sevenoaks, had the unique experience, while Canon Residentiary of Peterborough, of reading his own obituary twice – in March and July 1920.'*

(17) Queen Victoria's jubilee – 20 June 1887 was the 50th anniversary of the Queen's accession.

(20) The new town hall, Northampton – The first part of the Guildhall was built in 1861-4. The building was extended on the west in 1889-92.

Northampton Guildhall by Tony Hisgett
Creative Commons Attribution 2.0 Generic licence

This work is openly licenced via CC BY-NC-SA 4.0.
https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-sa/4.0/

(21) J Lansbury – There were a number of people with the surname Lansbury and its variations who lived in the vicinity of Harlestone in the late 19th century. 'J Lansbury' has not been positively identified. It is possible that he may have been John Lansbury aged 81 whose death was registered in 1906 in the Brixworth registration district – at the time of the 1901 census, this person was recorded as John Lantsbury, a widower living at East Haddon.

(31) Reading room – 'Village Roots' p. 77 recounts that '*In 1883 Canon William Bury, the Rector, first mentioned the need for a room for readings and other meetings, to replace the room in a beer house on Fisher's Hill (now called Windmill Hill on the A428 in Lower Harlestone) at that time used as a parish hall*'. It seems likely that this was the reading room mentioned in the manuscript, as a purpose-built Institute at Harlestone was not opened until 1924.

(33) Countess Spencer – Charlotte Seymour (1835-1903) married the 'Red Earl' in 1858.

(37) Red Earl – John Spencer, 5th Earl Spencer (1835-1910) was known as the 'Red Earl' because of his long red beard.

(38) The old blind man who walked from Brington – This individual has not been identified. The 1881, 1891 & 1901 censuses of Great Brington and Little Brington do not record any of the residents as being blind.

(46) The chapel – On 23 May 1874, *Northampton Mercury* reported the opening of the new Baptist chapel, which took place four days earlier. It stood in Upper Harlestone and took the place of an earlier building which was situated in Lower Harlestone.

(52) I had two of the Bots in view at the same time – Ernest married Catherine Florence Bott, who was 19 months his senior. The other Bott sister mentioned was presumably the next oldest of that family - Emma Eliza, who was 29 months younger than Ernest.

(56) Prince Alexander Munster of Derneburg (1858-1922) was the owner of Maresfield Park, near Uckfield, Sussex from 1899 but it was confiscated by the Government early in the First World War.

(67) Farmer named Bramley – This section may relate to the same incident described on page (33), which took place early in Ernest's working life. Of those listed in the 1891 census, the two most likely people to be this farmer are:

- Samuel Brambley, aged 48, a farmer living at Fleetlands Farm, Harlestone along with his wife, son Thomas (aged 20) and daughter Mary (aged 15) and a visitor.
- John Brambley, aged 33, a stone mason and farmer living at an unnamed farm house at Little Brington with his wife, three daughters (aged 9, 2 and six months) and a son (aged 8), as well as his brother-in-law and a servant.

(74) Man named Baldwin – At the time of the 1881 census, there were six men with that surname living at Church Brampton.

This work is openly licenced via CC BY-NC-SA 4.0.
https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-sa/4.0/

(74) Man named Dent – The 1881 census lists five men with that surname living at Harlestone.

(92) Man called Goldby at Lower Harlestone – The 1881 census records seven men with that surname living in the parish of Harlestone.

(97) Mr Sanders – In 1881, Henry Sanders was the farmer at Brampton Hill. He was 58 years old and had been born at Harlestone. At that time, he employed nine men and eight boys to help with 360 acres. His household included his wife Grace, children Henry C and Annie S, along with three servants (Eliza Rigby, Sarah Carter and Micheal Duffey). On 16 October 1903, *Northampton Mercury* reported the death four days earlier of Henry Sanders of Brampton Hill aged 81 and stated that:

> '*His name was originally Mr Henry Cooper, son of the late Mr C Cooper of Harleston, but on succeeding to the estate of his uncle he took the name of Sanders.*'

(97) Cooper of Harlestone – The only man with that surname who was recorded as living in Harlestone in 1881 was John Cooper, a butcher and grazier of 8 acres who employed one man and one boy. He had been born at West Haddon. The other members of his household were his wife Sarah, a servant (Annie Watson) and a lodger (Annie Cooch).